

EMPOWER



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ACTIVITY SHEET



Tragedy can impact almost every aspect of your life: your thoughts, feelings, biology, behaviour and relationships. As you step into uncharted territory, your faith will also likely be tested. You may not have had a choice in dealing with this adversity, but you do get to choose what happens next.



SESSION OBJECTIVES

This session is designed to help you understand:

- (a)** the impact critical incidents can have on thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- (b)** the impact distress has on your body, faith and relationships
- (c)** the biological impact of stress and how to take back control resilience, rehabilitation and recovery

The Impact

When facing adverse life events, your humanity makes you vulnerable to being mentally, emotionally, behaviourally, biologically, spiritually and relationally impacted. Even though people can be impacted in different ways, the experiences listed below are quite common. Identify whether you have been impacted in any of the following ways:



Thoughts	✓	Feelings	✓	Behaviours	✓
Difficulty concentrating		Sadness		Withdrawal from people	
Memory problems		Shock		Low motivation	
Confusion		Denial		Self-harm	
Decision making trouble		Fear		Substance use/abuse	
Racing mind		Helpless		Irritability	
Slowed down thinking		Hopeless		Poor impulse control	
Suicidal thoughts		Anger		Low tolerance for others	
Flashbacks to the event		Loneliness		Strong reaction to change	
Intrusive thoughts		Guilt		Difficulty executing skills	
Avoiding certain thoughts		Shame		Activity withdrawal	
Thinking you're not safe		Grief		Disruption of daily routine	
Negative self-thoughts		Numb		Aggression and hostility	
Anger towards God		Disappointment		Immoral choices	



Physical Response

✓ Beliefs & Spirituality

✓ Relationships



Low levels of energy		Loss of faith		Relationship withdrawal	
Difficulty falling asleep		Resisting biblical counsel		Difficulty trusting people	
Sleeping more than usual		Feeling prayer is pointless		Trusting people too much	
Difficulty staying asleep		Doubting God		Changes in sexual activity	
Fatigue		Withdrawal from church		Clinginess to others	
Physical aches and pains		Questioning your beliefs		Critical of others	
Vomiting or diarrhea		Feeling life is meaningless		Doubting relationships	
Sweating		Rejecting encouragement		Aggressive to others	
Eating more than usual		Struggle reading scripture		Feeling alone	
Loss of appetite		Avoiding worship music		Feeling misunderstood	
Tearfulness		Blaming God		Increased conflict	
Headaches or dizziness		Feeling God is distant		Amplified defensiveness	
Stomach problems		Feeling spiritually void		Passive-aggressive	



NOTE: PROFESSIONAL CARE: If you have encountered thoughts about harming yourself or others, tell your Doctor right away. If you're engaging in excessive substance use or risk-taking behaviours, speak with a licenced therapist or trusted Pastor for additional support or referrals.

**YOU ARE NEITHER YOUR
BRAIN NOR YOUR BODY,
RATHER YOU HAVE A BRAIN
AND INHABIT YOUR BODY.
SO RATHER THAN FOLLOWING
YOUR FEELINGS, INFORM
YOUR FEELINGS.**

**Who's better
positioned
than you to
encourage,
instruct
and remind
yourself that
God is still on
the throne?**



Q: What are the thoughts or memories that trigger an emotional response for you?

Q: What can you tell your brain and body when it sets off a false alarm?

Q: What can you practically do to calm yourself down when triggered?

**AS YOU BECOME
MORE AWARE OF
YOUR TRIGGERS AND
AUTOMATIC REACTIONS,
INSTEAD OF GETTING
FRUSTRATED, THANK
YOUR BRAIN FOR TRYING
TO PROTECT YOU AND
LET YOUR BODY KNOW
THAT IT WAS JUST
A FALSE ALARM.**

Body Scan

As King Solomon reminds us in Ecclesiastes 3:1-4, 'there are seasons for everything, including a time for sorrow'. However, that time is not all the time. When left unregulated, emotional trauma can have an enduring impact on our brain and body. By conducting a 10-step Body Scan, you can not only become aware of the impact stress may be having, but also take back control.



1. Find a quiet space where you can be alone and undisturbed	6. In your mind, describe what the stress, pain or tension feels like
2. Position your body in a way where you feel comfortable and relaxed	7. Take another breath and upon exhaling, release that pain and tension
3. Take a few slow controlled breaths (4 seconds in; 6 seconds out)	8. Ask for God's peace to invade this part of your body, then speak with authority
4. With your eyes closed, slowly scan your body from head to toe	9. Continue scanning and repeating this process, until you reach your toes
5. If you identify any stress, tension or pain anywhere in your body - STOP!	10. When you are ready - take your time - slowly open your eyes

Q: How does it feel to slow your heart rate, regulate breathing and release the tension?



“PROMISE ME YOU’LL ALWAYS REMEMBER... YOU’RE BRAVER THAN YOU BELIEVE, AND STRONGER THAN YOU SEEM, AND SMARTER THAN YOU THINK.”

— CHRISTOPHER ROBIN TO POOH, A.A. MILNE